



# The Wide Awake Bulletin



**The Lincoln Group of New York** FEBRUARY 2010  
DEDICATED TO THE STUDY OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

## President's Letter



Joseph Garrera

**D**ear Friends & Members,

The Lincoln Bicentennial is now history, and it was a great year for Lincoln studies. Between the new books, public programs, and television documentaries, it was a spectacular celebration.

With the recent passing of our Vice President Hans Trefousse and the 2007 loss of Dr. John Lattimer, some of our most important leaders have now passed into history. They both lived outstanding lives and made their mark in the world of history.

At our March meeting, the executive committee will convene to among other responsibilities, select a [Continued on page 6](#)

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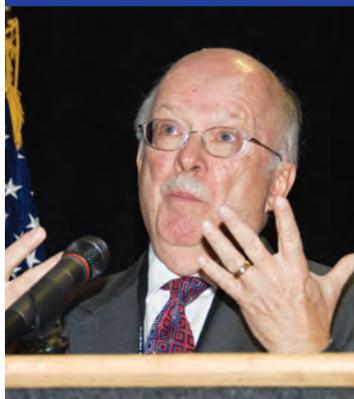


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**Editor: Steven R. Koppelman**

**Photographer & Artist:  
Henry F. Ballone**

## Ronald C. White Wins Award of Achievement for 2009



Ronald C. White, Jr.

**A. Lincoln** by Ronald C. White, Jr. is the winner of the Lincoln Group of New York's 2009 Award of Achievement for the best Lincoln work of the year. We will honor Dr. White and present him with the Award at our first meeting in 2010. White is the author of two previously acclaimed Lincoln books, *The Eloquent President*, and *Lincoln's Greatest Speech*.

The Award Committee in this, the recently concluded bicentennial year of Lincoln's birth, felt it was extremely important that it confer the Award of Achievement on a work that delivers

a comprehensive study of Lincoln to the public at large, a work that has broad reach and mass appeal, that also is of scholarly esteem. Ultimately, to select the work that does the most to encourage the study and appreciation of Abraham Lincoln—this is the committee's mission. The committee agreed that this book is not only the best one-volume Lincoln biography since David Herbert Donald's *Lincoln*, but importantly, is also extremely accessible and readable by the general public and scholars alike. As Professor Michael Gray of the Award Committee stated, "White's painstaking research and enjoyable pen allows the reader to get a glimpse into the [Continued on page 6](#)



Steven R. Koppelman

## 2009 Meetings Review

**In 2009 the Meetings of The Lincoln Group of New York provided a very eclectic look at the life and times of our 16<sup>th</sup> President as we celebrated the bicentennial of his birth**

**February 17, 2009** The Lincoln Bicentennial year got



Barry Schwartz

off to a rousing start in New York as professor Barry Schwartz lectured on Lincoln's place in history over the past 100 years, emphasizing America's general lessening of the "Great Man" view of history. Drawing on charts and data presented in his book, *Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era*, Schwartz presented information that while not all were necessarily in agreement with, provided much fodder for thought and passionate discussion.

Prior to Professor Schwartz's talk, Harold Holzer was presented with the 2008 Award of Achievement for his outstanding book, *Lincoln President-Elect: Abraham Lincoln and the Great Secession Winter 1860 – 1861*. Steve Koppelman, who served on the Award Committee, presented the award, stating, "aside from the substantial level and depth of the research, Harold has written this book so vividly, that you literally feel as if you are riding with Lincoln on the inaugural train from Springfield to Washington DC. You see the sights, you hear the sounds, you smell the smells, and most notably, you think his thoughts."



Harold Holzer & Steven R. Koppelman

One final highlight of the evening was the tribute paid to former Lincoln Group of New York member, Adaline Mautner who passed away in 2005, by President Joseph Garrera, and most poignantly by her two grandsons, David and Alan Miller. Those that remember Adaline will certainly think of her as a "character" to say the least, and full of life. She was a generous and energizing member. With loving thanks, Adaline's family



Adaline Mautner



Alan & David Miller

most graciously donated her collection of books and other Lincolniana to The Lincoln Group of New York. Some of these materials were included in the evening's popular book raffle and others are yet to be included at future book raffles. We offer our thanks to Adaline and her family for their friendship and generous support.

**April 21, 2009** One of those

often quoted phrases that no one really seems to know the origin of, is the following: "behind every strong man there's a strong woman." This may or may not truly be the case, it certainly is arguable, and so too was the subject of Catherine Clinton's new book and lecture for this meeting, *Mrs. Lincoln: A Life*.



Catherine Clinton

Certainly, the subject of Mary Lincoln is one that sparks conflicting emotions in many people. Professor Clinton made a very strong case that perhaps we don't know the real Mary. In presenting a balanced portrayal of the various controversies surrounding Mrs. Lincoln's life, Professor Clinton provided her audience with much to ponder and much to debate.

**December 1, 2009** The New-York Historical Society

was the venue for a special Lincoln bicentennial celebration meeting of The Lincoln Group of New York, which also sponsored the very special program that evening. *Lincoln as Commander-In-Chief* featured Pulitzer Prize winning historian Dr. James M. McPherson, Professor of History Emeritus at the United States Naval Academy Dr. Craig L. Symonds, and Co-Chair of the Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Harold Holzer as moderator. These three Lincoln scholars touched on various aspects of Lincoln's relationships with his generals and admirals, command skills, self-taught military education, and his belief in new technology to help win the Civil War.

Those who arrived early this evening also enjoyed the wonderful exhibition on display at the New-York Historical Society, *Lincoln and New York* (see page 3 for article on the exhibition). Harold Holzer is the Chief Historian for the exhibition; it closes on March 25, 2010 so there is still time to see it.



James M. McPherson, Craig Symonds & Harold Holzer

## Lincoln and New York

### The Exhibition

On October 9, 2009, The New-York Historical Society launched a groundbreaking interpretive exhibition, *Lincoln and New York*, which explores, for the first time, the significant historic ties between Abraham Lincoln and New York. Lincoln owed much of his political success to how he affected the state of New York and how it affected him. This becomes exceedingly clear in the exhibition as the influence the city had on the man and the man on the city, is fully explored. Co-Chairman of the Lincoln U.S. Bicentennial Commission, Harold Holzer, is the Chief Historian for the exhibition, which runs through March 25, 2010.

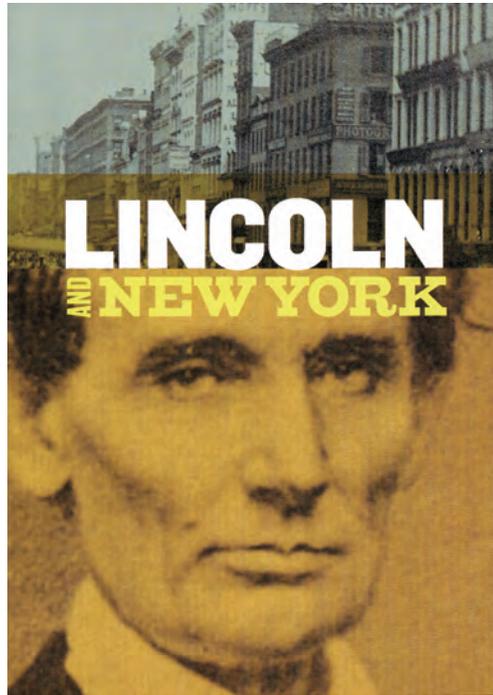
The Executive Committee of The Lincoln Group of New York had the opportunity to attend the Preview and Reception for the exhibition on the evening of October 8. The exhibition essentially begins with Lincoln's February 1860 Cooper Union address and ends with his New York funeral procession when 150,000 mourners lined Broadway to see him lie in state in City Hall. In between these two colossal events, significant aspects of Lincoln—his political skill, his compassion, his determination to end slavery, are all on display in multi-media formats. In addition, the anti-Lincoln Democratic Copperheads are heard from in the exhibition, providing a very balanced and nuanced look at the passions of the period.

Highlights include the lectern that Lincoln stood at and used during his Cooper Union address, an actual Wide Awake torch used in a torch-light parade through the streets of New York, a genuine draft lottery wheel, and most hauntingly, the actual uniform jacket (with bullet hole) worn by Lincoln's friend Elmer Ellsworth when he was fatally shot on May 24, 1861 in Alexandria Virginia. Perhaps most impressive though, Lincoln's actual hand written letter to Horace Greeley, from August 22, 1862 in response to Greeley's article titled, "The Prayer of Twenty Millions" is on display. The letter is most famous for the following quote, but note that Lincoln had already prepared a draft copy of the Emancipation Proclamation—he was waiting for the proper time to issue it:

"My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is *not* either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing *any* slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing *all* the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that."



Lincoln Group of New York photos & many more Lincoln & Civil War photos can be seen on Henry F. Ballone's web site at:  
<http://homepage.mac.com/civilwarnut>



Fran Berman, Henry F. Ballone, Hal Gross, Paul Ellis-Graham, Milton Seltzer, Harold Holzer, Steven R. Koppelman & Richard F. Sloan

# Common Cents

In the diary of Lincoln's secretary, John Hay, Hay quotes Lincoln as stating, "Common looking people are the best in the world: that is the reason the Lord makes so many of them." This comment was Lincoln's reply, in a dream he had, in which normal everyday people referred to him as a common looking man.

There is no more common coin than the penny but to some degree, the penny in 2009 and now 2010 has become uncommon, at least in terms of what people expect to see when they look at it.

The Lincoln penny, originally designed in 1909, contained a very simple design on its reverse; two stalks of wheat on the outer edges with the words One Cent, and United States of America between, and E Pluribus Unum (meaning one out of many) on the upper edge.

This design lasted for fifty years, until the U.S. Mint changed it as part of Lincoln's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration, to become the more familiar Lincoln Memorial reverse. This then became the standard for another fifty years, until the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth, when the U.S. Mint introduced four different reverse designs. The mint created these designs to trace the progression of Lincoln's life.

The first one, reflecting his days in Kentucky features the log cabin where Lincoln was born (near Hodgenville). The second design represented his Indiana years and it features the young Lincoln as a rail-splitter, though taking a break from his manual labor in order to read a book.

The third, the Illinois penny, reflects Lincoln's work as a state legislator as he appears standing in front of the Old State Capitol building. The final design has an image of the unfinished U.S. Capitol dome, which connotes that though the Civil War was tearing the nation apart, Lincoln worked to bring it back together.

Now, 2010 marks a brand new reverse design for the common penny, one that I suspect we will see until the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lincoln's birth. Released in Springfield Illinois in February, the "Union Shield" penny will now be the design going forward. This was a common symbol during the civil war era, as Indian head pennies minted during that time included union shields.

This shield depicts thirteen vertical stripes with a horizontal bar on top that reads "E Pluribus Unum." The

symbolism here is of the original thirteen colonies coming together to form our union. Also showing on the new design is "United States of America" across the upper edge and "One Cent" in a scroll design that covers the lower part of the shield.

Originally, there were 18 potential designs proposed for the new reverse of the 2010 penny. They all essentially included similar themes that included the United States Capitol building, the American flag, various shield designs, an eagle, and the wheat stalks reminiscent of the 1909 design.



Eighteen Proposed 2010 Designs Above & Left

Four Final Proposed 2010 Designs Below



It is altogether fitting and proper that the penny continues to depict Lincoln. While there are so many of them, there are not so many of the 2009 designs around and though there will be plenty of "Union Shield" designs around soon, it is currently unique amongst the plethora of common pennies that we see every day. As Lincoln was a unique example of the "common man" so are these new pennies unique examples of the most common of coins.



## In Memoriam

### David Herbert Donald

David Herbert Donald, the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian of the Civil War era and biographer of Abraham Lincoln, died on May 17, 2009. He was 88.

A professor emeritus at Harvard University, Donald won Pulitzer Prizes for his biographies of abolitionist Charles Sumner and novelist Thomas Wolfe. However, his books on Lincoln, most especially his 1995 biography, *Lincoln*, are what positioned him as one of the nation's preeminent Lincoln scholars. His other Lincoln related books include *Lincoln's Herndon*, a biography of Lincoln's law partner, *Lincoln at Home*, a study of his family life, and *We Are Lincoln Men*, essays about Lincoln's friends and associates.

Donald, an honorary member of The Lincoln Group of New York, last addressed the Group on November 11, 2003. He was a distinguished historian and a true gentleman; we will miss him greatly.

### Merrill D. Peterson

Merrill D. Peterson, 88, died September 23, 2009 at a retirement home in Charlottesville Virginia. Perhaps best known for his work on Thomas Jefferson including his 1970 biography, *Jefferson and the New Nation*, his 1994 study on Lincoln, *Lincoln in American Memory*, placed him extremely high in the world of Lincoln scholarship. This work explored how generations of Americans have viewed Lincoln in thought and imagination. At the time, Richard N. Current called it "a comprehensive, keenly perceptive, and highly readable history of Lincoln's reputation."

In a 1995 interview with National Public Radio, Peterson in comparing the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC to the Jefferson Memorial stated the following, "I'm always dumbfounded by the power of the Lincoln Memorial," he said. "I have great admiration for the Jefferson Memorial. . . . But it does not move me the way the Lincoln Memorial does, and that's, you see, the difference about Lincoln. Lincoln brings up chokes in the throat or maybe even tears to the eyes."

### Professor Hans Trefousse



Hans Trefousse & Joseph Garrera

by Joseph Garrera

It is with sadness that I report the death of Lincoln Group of New York Vice President, Hans L. Trefousse, who died at his Long Island home on Friday, January 8, 2010, he was 88.

Hans was a remarkable man who lived a highly successful and historic life. To LGNY members Hans was a distinguished Professor of History Emeritus of the City University of New York.

His academic career covered the years 1950 to his retirement in 1998. Hans had written or edited more than twelve books including his landmark study, *The Radical Republicans: Lincoln's Vanguard for Radical Justice* published in 1969 by Alfred A. Knopf. Hans also wrote important biographies on several of the Radical Republicans including Thaddeus Stevens, Benjamin F. Butler and Carl Schurz.

His success in life went far beyond the academic world. During the Second

World War, he served overseas from 1941 to 1946. During an enemy attack, he was wounded and bleeding from an exploding hand grenade. Needing medical attention a jeep pulled up with the civilian driver yelling "get in, I'll take you to the infirmary" – the driver was war correspondent, and famous writer Ernest Hemmingway.

Well into his 80's Hans remained active, leading a robust life, always remembering and appreciating his friends. Twelve years ago, Hans introduced me to one of his dear friends, Professor Arthur Schlesinger. From the start, Schlesinger became my friend with whom I met with a number of times. Schlesinger frequently spoke of Hans as "a great scholar with a clear mind and an eye for true research."

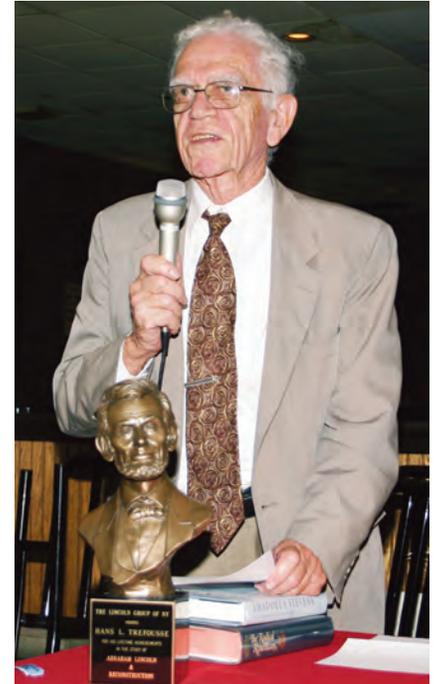
I recall in 1995 when David Herbert Donald made one of his famous visits as our speaker in New York, preparing to speak, Professor Donald paid high honor to Hans stating, "He knows far more about Lincoln than I do, but as your speaker, I'll do my best."

Hans was a compassionate human being, kind and generous to everyone. In 1999, his wife of 53 years Rashedle Friedlander Trefousse, Ph.D. died of cancer. Hans never recovered from this loss. He spoke of Rashedle often and with great tenderness.

When I was out to dinner with Hans on Long Island a few years back, he told me that after Rashedle died, he could not bear to eat dinner alone without her, so he went out for dinner every night with friends and colleagues.

We say goodbye to Hans now, our friend, our colleague, and our mentor. However, we can find solace in knowing that Hans is home with God and with Rashedle. He is once again, reunited with the person who made his life complete and happy.

Hans now lives in Lincoln literature. His books, his articles, and scholarship will endure far into the future.



Professor Hans Trefousse



**President's Letter - continued**

new president of The Lincoln Group of New York. When I was elected president eleven years ago I had always hoped to remain in office until the Bicentennial was past. Now that we have passed that milestone, it is time for me to step aside and allow someone new to take over and lead our organization into the new decade.

Everyone has always been so kind and gracious to me. Our executive committee represents some of the finest people I have ever known.

I'm eager to see whom they nominate as your next president. I am absolutely certain their choice will be outstanding.

I look forward to greeting everyone on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Sincerely,

**Joseph Garrera  
President**

**Ronald C. White Award - continued**

16th president's life heretofore unknown to scholars, and sure to be utilized by future historians."

What separates *A. Lincoln* from other biographies is that Lincoln's evolving intellect, through analysis of his words, is the keystone of White's work. He uses what Lincoln read, wrote, and said, to show this growth and development. This synthesis and analysis of Lincoln's thoughts and words help to make White's biography unique. In addition, as Award Committee member Joseph Truglio said, White "presented a side of Lincoln rarely seen, his spiritual side." The political, personal, and moral Lincoln are all on display here as readers will come away from this wonderfully written book with a much greater understanding of the foundations of Lincoln's thought process and ultimately of Lincoln the man.

The Award Committee was comprised of Steven R. Koppelman, Chair, Dr. Michael Gray, and Joseph Truglio.



**ATTENTION MEMBERS:  
YOUR GENEROUS HELP IS REQUESTED...**

As you're certainly aware, one of our most popular Lincoln Group of New York meeting events is the book raffle. What you might not know is that our members donate all of the books. That's where your help is needed. To keep this raffle going with high quality Lincoln publications, we respectfully request that if you have any books that you can spare for the raffle, simply bring them to the meeting and see one of our Executive Committee members to ensure that they're included in that night's raffle.

*Thank you, in advance, for anything you can contribute.*

**A**ward Committee: *A special thanks to our dedicated members that serve on the award committee.*  
Steven R. Koppelman, Chair • Dr. Michael Gray • Joseph A. Truglio

**THE WIDE AWAKE** is a publication of The Lincoln Group of New York. We welcome your feedback, letters and comments, as well as news of your Lincoln related activities. Please direct your correspondence to:  
Steven R. Koppelman, Editor • The Wide Awake • 5 Leigh Court • Randolph, NJ 07869

**L**incoln & Civil War event photos & albums can be viewed at: <http://homepage.mac.com/civilwarnut>

**N**ote: Member ideas and opinions are very important. Anyone wishing to speak with Lincoln Group of New York president Joseph E. Garrera is encouraged to do so by calling (484) 553-2592 evenings between 7:00 - 9:00 P.M. E.S.T.